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FEMALE SUFFRAGE.

It is a singular fact that England, which has been always esteemed the safest and slowest of all factors in European politics, should be now seriously meditating on such a revolutionary and headlong course of action as the political emancipation of women. It is a sign, and a very ominous sign, of the restlessness and feverishness which have come upon this century in its last twenty years of life, and from which England is suffering no less than other nations, is perhaps even suffering more than they, since when aged people take the diseases natural to youth it fares ill with them, more ill than with the young. There are many evidences that before very long, whichever political party may be in office, female suffrage will be awarded at Westminster, and if it be so, it is scarcely to be doubted that the French Chambers and the representative Houses at Washington will be loth to lag behind and resist such a precedent. The influence on the world will scarcely be other than most injurious to its prosperity and most degrading to its wisdom.

It is true that the wholesale exercise of electoral rights by millions of uneducated and unwashed men is a spectacle so absurd that a little more or a little less absurdity may be held not to matter very greatly. The intellectual world in political matters has voluntarily abdicated already and given its scepter to the mob. "Think you," said Publius Scipio to the raging populace, "then, I shall fear those free whom I sent in chains to the slave market?" But the modern politician, of whatever nation he be (with the solitary exception of Bismarck), does fear the slaves whose chains he has struck off before they know how to use their liberty, and has in him neither the candor nor the courage of Scipio.

Rationally, logically, political power ought to be allotted in proportion to the stake which each voter possesses in the country. But this sound principle has been totally disregarded in the

present political systems of both Europe and America. Vaporings anent the inherent "rights of man" have been allowed to oust out common-sense and logical action, and he whose contributions to the financial and intellectual power of his nation are of the largest and noblest order has no more electoral voice in the direction of the nation than the drunken navvy or the howling unit of the street-mob. This is esteemed liberty, and commends itself to the populace, because it levels, or seems to level, intellect and wealth with poverty and ignorance. It is probable that America will in years to come be the first to change this, the doctrine of democracy, as there are signs that the United States will probably grow less and less democratic with every century, and its large land-owners will create an aristocracy which will not be tolerant of the dominion of the mob. But meantime Europe is swaying between absolutism and socialism, with that tendency of the pendulum to swing wildly from one extreme to the other which has been always seen in the whole history of the world; and one of the most curious facts of the epoch is that both democracy and conservatism are inclined to support and promote female suffrage, alleging each of them totally different motives for their conduct, and totally different reasons for the opinions which they advance in its favor.

The motives of the Tory leaders are as unlike those of Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Garratt, and the rest of the female agitators as stone is unlike water, as water is unlike fire. The Conservative gentlemen wish to admit women into political life because they consider that women are always religious, stationary, and wedded to ancient and stable ways; the female agitators, on the contrary, clamor to have themselves and their sex admitted within the political arena because they believe that women will be foremost in all emancipation, innovation, and social democratic works. It is an odd contradiction, and displays perhaps more than anything else the utter confusion and the entire recklessness and abandonment of principle characteristic of all political parties in the latter half of the nineteenth century. It is very possible that as the English laborer obtained his vote through the confusion and jealousies of party against the sane, the serene, and the unbiased judgment of patriots, so woman in England, and if in England, ultimately in America, will obtain hers. Opportunist policies have always their sure issue in sensational and hurried

legislation; and in Europe at the present hour, in England and France most especially, an opportunist policy is the only policy pursued.

What is there to be said in favor of female suffrage? It may be treated as an open subject, since both Reactionists and Socialists can advance for it claims and arguments of the most totally opposite nature. Perhaps it may be said that there is some truth in both sides of these arguments and entire truth in neither. It is probable that female politicians would be many of them more reactionary than the Reactionists, and many of them would be more socialistic than the Socialists. The golden mean is not in favor with women or with mobs.

In England, both the Conservative and Radical intentions are at present limited to giving the suffrage to such women alone as are possessed of real property. But it is certain that this limitation could not be preserved; for the women without property would clamor to be admitted, and would succeed by their clamor as the men without property have done. No doubt to see a woman of superior mind and character, capable of possessing and administering a great estate, left without electoral voice, whilst her carter, her porter, or the most illiterate laborer on her estate possesses and can exercise it, is on the face of it absurd. But it is not more absurd than that her brother should have his single vote outnumbered and neutralized by the votes of the men-servants, scullions, and serving-boys who take his wage and fill his servants'-hall and kitchen. It would be more honest to say that the whole existing system of electoral power all over the world is absurd; and will remain so, because in no nation is there the courage, perhaps in no nation is there the intellectual power, capable of putting forward and sustaining the logical doctrine of the *just supremacy of the fittest*: a doctrine which it is surely more vitally necessary to insist on in a republic than in a monarchy. It is because the fittest have not had the courage to resist the pressure of those who are intellectually their inferiors, and whose only strength lies in numbers, that democracy has been enabled to become the power that it has. Theoretically, a republic is founded on the doctrine of the supremacy of the fittest; but who can say that since the days of Perikles any republic has carried out this doctrine practically? The lawyer or the chemist who neglects his business to push himself to the front in political life in France is certainly not the most admirable pro-

duct of the French intellect ; nor can it be said by any impartial student that every President of the United States has been the highest type of humanity that the United States can produce.

Alexander Dumas *fils*, the most accomplished, but the most rabid of the advocates of female suffrage, resumes what seems to him the absurdity of the whole system in a sentence. “Mme. de Sévigné ne peut pas voter ; M. Paul son jardinnier peut voter.” He does not seem to see that there is as great an absurdity in the fact that were Mme. de Sévigné Monsieur de Sévigné, and were she living now, all her wit and wisdom would fail to confer on her more voting power than would be possessed by “Paul son jardinnier.”

With all deference to him, I do not think that Mme. de Sévigné would have cared a straw to rival Paul, the gardener, in going to the electoral urn. Mme. de Sévigné, like every woman of wit and mind, had means of exercising her influence so incomparably superior to the paltry one of recording a vote in a herd that she would, I am sure, have had the most profound contempt for the latter. Indeed, her contempt would have probably extended to the whole electoral system and “government by representation.” Women of wit and genius must always be indifferent to the opportunity of going up to the ballot booth in company with their own footman and coachman. To those who have a sense of humor the position is not one of dignity. Hypatia, when she feels herself the equal of Julian, will not readily admit that Dadus, however enfranchised, is her equal.

Absurdities are not cured by adding greater absurdities to them ; discrepancies are not remedied by greater discrepancies being united to them. Whether women voted or not would not change by a hair's breadth the existing, and to many thinkers the deplorable fact, that under the present electoral system throughout the world, the sage has no more electoral power than the dunce, that Plato's voice counts for no more than a fool's. The admission of women could do nothing to remedy this evil. It would only bring into the science of politics what it has too much of already ; inferior intelligence and hysterical action. No : reply both the French essayist and the conservative advocates of female suffrage. Not so ; because we should only admit women qualified to use it by the possession of property. But it would be impossible to sustain this limitation in the teeth of all the leveling tendencies of modern legislation ; it would speedily be declared unjust, intolerable, aristo-

cratic, iniquitous, and it would soon become impossible to deny to Demos' wife or mistress, mother or sister, what you award to Demos himself. If women be admitted at all to the exercise of the franchise they must be admitted wholesale down to the lowest dregs of humanity as men are now admitted. The apple-woman will naturally argue that she has as much right to it as the heiress ; how can you say she has not when you have given the apple-man as much electoral voice as the scholar ? It is idle to talk of awarding the female suffrage on any basis of property when property has been deliberately rejected as a basis for male suffrage.

The project often insisted on by the advocates of the system, to give votes only to unmarried women, may be dismissed without discussion, as it would be found to be wholly untenable. It would give votes to the old maids of Cranford village, and the enriched *cocottes* of great cities, and would deny them to a Mme. Roland or a Mme. de Staël, to Lady Burdett Coutts or to Mme. Adam. The impossibility of any such limitation being sustained if female suffrage be ever granted, renders it unnecessary to dwell longer on its self-evident defects.

Again, are women prepared to purchase electoral rights by their willingness to fulfill military obligations ? If not, how can they expect political privileges unless they are prepared to renounce for them the peculiar privileges which have been awarded to them in view of the physical weakness of their sex ? Dumas does, indeed, distinctly refuse to let them be soldiers, on the plea that they are better occupied in child-bearing, but in the same moment he asserts that they ought to be judges and civil servants. It is difficult to see why to postpone an assault to a beleaguered city because *Mme. la Generale est accouchée* would be more absurd than to adjourn the hearing of a pressing lawsuit because *Mme. la Jugesse* would be *sur la paille*. The much graver and truer objection lies less in the physical than in the mental and moral inferiority of women. I use moral in its broadest sense. Women on an average have little sense of justice, and hardly any sense whatever of awarding to others a freedom for which they do not care themselves. The course of all modern legislation is its tendency to make by-laws, fretting and vexatious laws trenching unjustifiably on the personal liberty of the individual. If women were admitted to political power these laws would be multiplied indefinitely and incessantly. The *infiniment petit* would be the dominant factor

in politics. Such meddling legislation as the Sunday Closing Act in England, and the Maine Liquor Laws in the United States would be the joy and aim of the mass of female voters. Women cannot understand that you can make no nation virtuous by act of parliament; they would construct their acts of parliament on purpose to make people virtuous whether they chose or not, and would not see that this would be a form of tyranny as bad as any other. A few years ago a State in America (I think it was Maine or Massachusetts) decreed that because Pomeranian dogs were given to biting people, all Pomeranian dogs within the State, ill and well, young and old, should on a certain date be killed: and they were killed, two thousand odd in number. Now, this is precisely the kind of legislation which women would make in their moments of panic; the disregard of individual rights, the injustice to innocent animals and their owners, the invasion of private property under the doctrinaire's plea of the general good, would all commend themselves to women in their hysterical hours, for women are more tyrannical and more self-absorbed than men. Renan in his "*Marc-Aurèle*" observes that the decline of the Roman Empire was hastened and even, in much, primarily brought about by the elements of feebleness introduced into it by the Christian sects' admission of women into the active and religious life of men. The woman-worship springing from the adoration of the virgin-mother was at the root of the emasculation and indifference to political and martial duties which it brought into the lives of men who ceased to be either bold soldiers or devoted citizens. I do not think the moral and mental qualities of the average woman so inferior to those of the average man as is conventionally supposed. The average man is not an intellectual nor a noble being; neither is the average woman. But there are certain solid qualities in the male creature which are lacking from the female; such qualities as toleration and calmness in judgment, which are of infinite value, and in which the female character is almost invariably deficient; a lack in her which makes the prophecy of Dumas, that she will one day fill judicial and forensic duties, a most alarming prospect, as alarming as the prediction of Goldwin Smith that the negro population will eventually outnumber and extinguish the Aryan race in the United States.

There are men with women's minds, women with men's minds; Mr. Gladstone's is a woman's mind, Mrs. Somerville's was a man's

mind ; but these are exceptions to the rule, and such exceptions are exceedingly rare.

The Conservative or patrician party in England advocates the admission of women into politics for much the same motives as influenced the early Christians ; they believe that her influence will be universally exercised to preserve the moral excellences of the body politic, the sanctity of the home, the supremacy of religion, the cautiousness of timid and wary legislators. The class of which the Conservatives are always thinking as the recipients of female suffrage would possibly in the main part do so. They would be persons of property and education, and as such might be trusted to do nothing rash. But they would be closely wedded to their prejudices. They would be narrow in all their views. Their church would hold a large place in their affections, and their legislation would be of the character which they now give to their county society. Moreover, as I have said, the suffrage once given to women, it could not be restricted to persons of property. The female factory hand in her garret would assert that she has as much right to and need of a voice as the female land-owner, and in face of the fact that the male factory hand and the male land-owner have been placed on the same footing in political equality, you would be unable to refute the argument.

The most intelligent and most eloquent of all the advocates of female suffrage is undoubtedly Dumas *filis*. No man can argue a case more persuasively ; nor is any man more completely wedded to one side of an argument than he. What does he claim for women in his famous "Appel aux Femmes ?" That not only should they exercise all political rights, but that they should be judges, consuls, and public servants. Yet he, her special pleader, Dumas *filis*, admits that she would bring to science the scorn of reason and the indifference to suffering which she has shown in so many centuries in the hallucinations and martyrdoms of religion ; that she would throw herself into it with *audace et frénésie* ; that she would hold all torture of no account if it solved an enigma, and would give herself to the beasts of the field "not to prove that Jesus lived, but to know if Darwin was right ;" and he passes on to the triumphant prediction that in sixty years' time the world will see the offspring of men and female monkeys, of women and apes ; though wherein this prospect for the future is glorious it were hard to say. But, stripped of that exaggeration which characterizes

all the arguments of a writer famous for anomaly, antithesis, and audacity, his prediction that his favorite client Woman will bring into her pursuit of the mysteries of science the same sort of *folie furieuse*, which Blandina and Agatha, and all the feminine devotees of the early years of Christianity brought into religion is a prophecy undoubtedly correct. She will bring the same into politics, into legislation, if she ever obtain a preponderant power in them.

The most dangerous tendency in English political life is at this moment the tendency to legislate *per saltum*: female legislation would invariably be conducted *per saltum*. The grasshopper-bounds of Mr. Gladstone would be outdone by the kangaroo-leaps of the female legislator when she moved at all. A "masterly inactivity" would not be understood by her; nor the profound good sense contained in the advice which is variously attributed to Talleyrand, Melbourne, and Palmerston: "When in doubt do nothing." There is the most mischievous desire in modern politicians to pull everything about merely to look as if they were great reformers; to strew the débris of the old order around them long ere they have even settled the foundations of the new; they do not consider the inevitable imperfection which must characterize all human institutions, they do not remember that if a system, whether political or social, works reasonably well, it should be supported, even if it be not symmetrically perfect in theory. These faults are characteristic of modern politicians, because modern politicians are for the most part no longer men trained from their youth in the philosophy of government, but opportunists who view politics as a field for self-advancement. Women will bring into politics these same faults greatly exaggerated and not balanced by that rough and ready common sense which characterizes most men who are not specialists or visionaries. Whether the female legislator would imprison all people who do not go to church, or would imprison all people who do not attend scientific lectures, the despotism would be equal; and it is certain that she would desire to imprison either one class or the other. Some writer has said: "I can as little understand why any one should fast in Lent, as I can understand why others should object to their fasting if it please them." But this would never be the attitude of the female politician in regard to either the fasting or the feasting of others. Sir Henry Thompson, in his admirable treatise on gastronomy, remarks

on the unwisdom of those who, because a certain food is palatable and nutritious to them, recommend it to every one they know, making no account of the difference in constitution and digestion of different persons. There exists a similar difference in mind and character, for which women would never make any allowance when forcing on the world in general their political or social nostrums. As we again and again see the woman expecting from her son the purity of manners of a maiden, and making no account, because she ignores them entirely, of the imperious necessities of sex, so we should see her in matters of national or universal import similarly disregarding or ignoring all facts of which she chose to take no note. She would increase and intensify the present despotisms and weaknesses of political life, and she would put nothing in their place, for she would have lost her own originality and charm. Science, indeed, presumes that in educating her it would strengthen her reasoning powers, and widen her mind into the acceptance of true liberty. But what proof is there that science would do anything of the sort? It has never yet showed any true liberality itself. Nothing can exceed the arrogance and the despotism of its own demands and pretensions; the immensity of its self-admiration, the tyrannical character of its exactions.

Dumas observes that happy women will not care for the suffrage because they are happy; he might have added, that brilliant women will not, because they have means of influencing men to any side and to any extent they chose without it. Who, then, would care to exercise it? All the unhappy women, all the fretful *déclassées*, all the thousands or tens of thousands of spinsters who know as much or as little of human nature as they do of political economy. What will such as these bring into political life? They can bring nothing except their own crotchets, their own weakness, their own hysterical agitations. Happy women are fond of men, but unhappy women hate them. The legislation voted for by unhappy women would be as much against men and all true liberty as Dumas himself is against them and it. Men at present legislate for women with remarkable fairness; but women would never legislate for men with anything approaching fairness, and as the numerical preponderance of votes would soon be on the female side, if female electors were once accepted, the prospect is alarming to all lovers of true freedom.

The woman is the enemy of freedom. Give her power and she

is at once despotic, whether she be called Elizabeth Tudor or Theroigné de Mirecourt, whether she be a beneficent or a malevolent ruler, whether she be a sovereign or a revolutionist. The enormous pretensions to the monopoly of a man's life which women put forward in marriage are born of the desire to tyrannize. The rage and amazement displayed by the woman when a man, whether her lover or her husband, is inconstant to her, comes from that tenacity over the man as a property which wholly blinds her to her own faults or lack of charm and power to keep him. A very clever woman never blames a man for inconstancy to her : she may perhaps blame herself. Women as a rule attach far too great a value to themselves; the woman imagines herself necessary to the man because the man is necessary to her. Hence that eternal antagonism of the woman against the man which is one of the saddest things in human nature. Every writer like Dumas, who does his best to increase this antagonism, commits a great crime. The happiness of the human race lies in the good-will existing between men and women. This good-will can not exist so long as women have the inflated idea of their own value which they now possess largely in Europe, and still more largely in America. A virtuous woman is above rubies, has said Solomon; but this depends very much on the quality of the virtue, and the idea prevailing among women that they are valuable, admirable and almost divine, merely because they *are* women, is one of the most mischievous fallacies born of human vanity, and accepted without analysis.

It has been passed, like many another fallacy, from generation to generation, and the enormous power of evil which lies in the female sex has been underestimated or conventionally disregarded for the sake of a poetic effect. The seducer is continually held up for condemnation, but the temptress is seldom remembered. It is common to write of women as the victims of men, and it is forgotten how many men are the victims in their earliest youth of women. Even in marriage the woman by her infidelity can inflict the most poignant, the most torturing dishonor on the man; the man's infidelity does not in the least touch the honor of the woman. She can never be in doubt as to the fact of her children being her own; but he may be perpetually tortured by such a doubt, nay, may be compelled through lack of proof to give his name and shelter to her offspring when he is morally convinced that they are not his. The woman can bring shame into a great race as the man

can never do, and oftentimes brings it with impunity. In marriage, moreover, the influence of the woman, whatever popular prejudices plead to the contrary, is constantly belittling and injurious to the intelligence of the man. How many great artists since the days of Andrea del Sarto have cursed the woman who has made them barter their heritage of genius for the "pottage" of worldly affluence? How much, how often, and how pitilessly have the petty affairs, the personal greeds, the unsympathetic and low-toned character of the woman he has unfortunately wedded, put lead on the winged feet of the man of genius, and made him leave the Muses for the god of barter beloved of the common people in the market-place? Not infrequently what is called with pious praise a good woman, blameless in her own conduct and devoted to what she conceives to be her duties, has been more fatal to the originality, the integrity, and the intellectual brilliancy of a man than the worst courtesan could have been. The injury which women have done the minds of men may fairly be set off against those social and physical injuries which men are said by M. Dumas to inflict so ruthlessly on women.

If outside monogamous marriage the woman suffers from the man, within it man suffers from the woman. It is doubtful if but for the obligation to it, which is entailed by property, and the desire for legitimate heirs, one man in a hundred of the richer classes would consent to marry. Whenever Socialism succeeds in abolishing property monogamy will be destroyed with it perforce.

In the lower strata of society the conjugal association is made on more equal terms: both work hard and both frequently come to blows. The poor man loses less by marriage than the rich man, for he has his comforts, his food, and his clothes looked after gratis, but the poor woman gains very little indeed by it; and if she got a hearing in the political world, she would probably brawl against it, or, which is still more likely, she would do worse and insist on marriage laws which should restrict the personal freedom of the man as severely and as tyrannically as the Sabbath observance laws do in Scotland, and as the Puritan exactions did in the early years of American colonization.

The net result of the entrance of the woman into the political arena can never be for the happiness of humanity.

"Prenant leur revanche de l'immobilité séculaire à laquelle on les a condamnées elles lent courrir par n'importe quels chemins

à côté de l'homme, devant lui si elles peuvent, contre lui s'il le faut, à la conquête d'un nouveau monde. En matière de sensation la femme est l'extrême, l'excès, de l'homme." Dumas recognizes the inevitable hostility which will be begotten between the sexes if they war in the same public arena, but he accepts it.

If female suffrage become law anywhere, it must be given to all women who have not rendered themselves ineligible for it by criminality. The result will scarcely be other than the emasculation and the confusion of the whole world of politics. The ideal woman is, we know, the type of heroism, fortitude, wisdom, sweetness, and light ; but even the ideal woman is not always distinguished by breadth of thought, and it is here a question not of the ideal woman at all, but of the millions of ordinary women who have as little of the sage in them as of the angel. Very few women are capable of being the sympathetic mistress of a great man, or the ennobling mother of a child of genius. Most women are the drag on the wheel to the higher aspirations, to the nobler impulses, to the more original and unconventional opinions, of the men whom they influence. The prospect of their increased ascendancy over national movements is very ominous. Is the mass of male humanity ready to accept it ?

Women will not find happiness in hostility to men even if they obtain a victory in it, which is very doubtful. Women of genius have never hated men : they have perhaps liked them too well. To the woman of genius love may not be the sole thing on earth, as it is to Gretchen ; it is only one amongst the many emotions, charms, and delights of life ; but she never denies its attraction, its consolation, its supreme ecstasy, its exquisite sympathies. Heloise and Aspasia can love better than Penelope.

Who, then, will become those enemies of men to whom Dumas looks for the emancipation of the weaker sex ? All the *délaissées*, all the *déclassées*, all the discontented, jaded, unloved, imbibited women in the world, all those, and their number is legion, who have not genius or loveliness, fortune or power, the wisdom to be mute or the sorcery to charm ; women restless, feverish, envious, irritable, imbibited ; whose time hangs heavy on their hands and whose brains seethe under the froth of ill-assorted and ill-assimilated knowledge.

"Quarry the granite rock with razors," wrote John Newman, "or moor the vessel with a thread of silk ; then may you hope with such keen and delicate instruments as human knowledge and hu-

man understanding to contend against these giants, the passions and the pride of man;" or against the difference and the influence of sex.

I know not why women should wish or clamor at once to resemble and to quarrel with man. The attitude is an unnatural one ; it is sterile, not only physically but mentally. It is true that the prejudices and conventionalities of society and the fictions of monogamy have stranded a vast number of women, undistinguished and unhappy, with no career and no interests, who would imagine themselves disgraced if they enjoyed the natural affections of life outside that pale of propriety which the conventions of society have created. These are the women who would care for political power and would be allowed to exercise it. What could the world gain from such as these? What would it not lose of the small modicum of freedom, of contentment, and of wisdom which it already possesses?

To most women success is measured by the balance at the bank, by the applause of the hour, and nothing is esteemed which has not received the hall-mark of the world's approval. There are exceptions, no doubt ; but they have been and are, I think, fewer than the advocates of female suffrage would have us believe. Men too often are *les moutons de Panurge*, but women are so almost invariably. The Arab who weeps when a female child is born to him is perhaps more correct in his measurement of the sex than the American who is prepared to make her the spoiled and wayward sovereign of his household.

I have previously used the words "mental and moral inferiority ;" it is perhaps necessary to explain them. By mental inferiority I do not mean that the average woman might not, if educated to it, learn as much mathematics or as much metaphysics as the ordinary man. I do not deny that Girton may produce senior wranglers or physiologists in time to come ; it may do so. But the female mind has a radical weakness which is often also its peculiar charm ; it is intensely subjective, it is only reluctantly forced to be impersonal, and it has the strongest possible tendency to tyranny, as I have said before. In public morality, also, the female mind is unconsciously unscrupulous ; it is seldom very frank or honest, and it would burn down a temple to warm its own pannikin. Women of perfect honesty of intentions and antecedents will adopt a dishonest course, if they think it will serve an aim or a person they care for,

with a headlong and cynical completeness which leaves men far behind it. In intrigue a man will often have scruples which the woman brushes aside as carelessly as if they were cobwebs, if once her passions or her jealousies are ardently involved. There is not much veracity anywhere in human nature, but it may always be roughly calculated that the man will be more truthful than the woman, in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred ; his judgments will be less colored by personal wishes and emotions, and his instincts toward justice will be straighter and less mobile than hers. Were women admitted into public life bribery would become a still greater factor in that life than it now is, which is needless. All the world over, what is wanted for the health of nations is the moral purification of politics, the elimination of venal and personal views, the disinterested advocacy and adoption of broad, just, and magnanimous principles of action. Can it be said that the entry of women into politics would have this effect? He must be a sanguine man who can think that it would, and he must have but little knowledge of women.

On a les défauts de ses qualités. This is one of the most profound axioms ever evolved out of a study of human nature. And all which constitutes the charm of women, mutability, caprice, impressionability, power of headlong self-abandonment, mingled with intense subjectiveness and self-engrossment, would all make of women an inferior but a most dangerous political force. Where Mr. Gladstone has sent out troops and recalled them a dozen times, she, with similar but still greater oscillations of purpose, would send them out and recall them five hundred times. The *Souvent femme varie* of François the First is true to all time. But in all her variations it is the Sejanus, the Orloff, the Bothwell of the moment, whom she would wade through seas of blood to please. This makes at once her dangerousness and her charm.

As scientists look forward to the time when every man will be bald from boyhood, thus having outgrown the last likeness to the beasts that perish, so enthusiasts for female suffrage look forward to a time when woman will have shed all her fair follies and rectified all her amusing inconsistencies. What will she be like then? Very unlovely it may safely be predicted, as unlovely as the men without hair; very mischievous for evil, it may also be deemed certain.

A French physiologist, who lectured in Russia not very long

ago, was amazed at the howls of impatience and disdain which were aroused in the female students amongst his audience in Moscow by his simple statement that the claims of the arts must not be wholly lost sight of in the demands and inquiries of science. They would not tolerate even the mention of the arts; in their fanaticism they would only worship one God. The youths were willing to award a place to art; the maidens would hear of nothing but science. "*Une grande schéresse de cœur domine la femme qui se donne à la Science*;" and with this dryness of the soul comes an unmerciful and intolerant disposition to tyranny over the minds of others.

It can not be denied that the quality which in women bestows most happiness on those around them, is that which is called in French and has no exact descriptive word in English: *gaieté de cœur*. Not frivolous unusefulness, or passion for diversion and excitement, but a sweet and happy spirit, finding pleasure in small things and great, and shedding a light like that of Moore's wild freshness of morning on the beaten tracks of life. Where will this pleasant gayety and smiling radiance go when, harassed, heated, and blown by the bitter winds of strife, the woman seeks to outshriek the man on political platforms, or when with blood-stained hands she bends over the torture-trough of the physiological laboratory? The humanities do not harden women; erudition may leave her loveliness and grace of form and mind; though as proficient a Greek and Latin scholar as any of the learned countrywomen of the Renaissance, yet she may be the joy of her home and the angel of the poor. A love of learning, of art, of nature, keeps long young the heart in which it has a place. But the noisy conflicts of the polling-booths and the pitiless cruelties of the laboratories will not do so. There is in every woman, even in the best woman, a sleeping potentiality for crime, a curious possibility of fiendish evil. Even her maternal love is dangerously near an insane ferocity, which at times breaks out in infanticide or child-murder. Everything which tends to efface in her her gentler and softer instincts tends to make of her a worse curse to the world than any man has ever been. If, indeed, in the centuries to come she should develop into the foe of man, which Dumas *filis* wishes her to become, it is by no means improbable that men, in sheer self-defense, will be compelled to turn on her and chain her down into the impotency of servitude once more.

If she once leave the power which nature has given her over her lovers, her friends, her sons, to become the opponent, the jealous rival and the acrid enemy of men, then men, it may be with surety predicted, will not long keep the gloves on as they fight with her, but with the brutality which is natural to the male animal and which is only curbed, not effaced, by the graceful hypocrisies of society and of courtship, will with his closed fists send her down into that lower place of *la femelle de l'homme*, from which it has been the effort and the boast of Christianity and of civilization to raise her. Woman can never truly conquer man, except by those irresistible weapons which the Queen of the Amazons leaned on with Alexander.

Man has, I repeat, been very fair in his dealings with women, as far as legislation goes; he could easily have kept her for all time to the hareem, and it has been a proof of his fairness, if not of his wisdom, that he has not done so. I have little doubt but that, before long, he will cede to her clamor, and let her seat herself beside him or opposite to him on the benches of his representative houses. When he does, he will, I think, regret the hareem.

There is a lax and perilous inclination in the mass of mankind, in these latter days of the century, to give anything which is much asked for.

“To yield to clamour and to pallid fears,
What wisdom, temperance, and truth deny;”

to let the reins go, and the steeds, which draw the chariot of national fate, gallop headlong, whither they will, downhill if they choose. The pessimism prevalent in the classes which think, lies at the root of their indifference to change, and their apathy and indolence before fresh demands. Men who think at all, see how unsatisfactory all things are, how unreal all religions, how fictitious the laws of marriage, how mutable the laws of property, how appalling the future of the world, when there will be not even standing-room upon it for all the billions of peoples begotten. And they are, therefore, in that mood which makes them willing to try any new thing, even as men at death's door languidly affirm their despairing readiness to try any nostrum or panacea tendered to them.

Women may, will, very possibly, snatch from the nerveless hand of the sick man those legal and legislative rights which she

covets. The political movements of modern times have been always in the direction of giving unlimited power to blind and unmeasured masses, whose use of that which is thus rashly given them the boldest prophet dare not predict. Such movement will probably give political power to women.

I confess that I, for one, dread the day which shall see this further development of that crude and restless character of the nineteenth century, which, with sublime self-contentment and self-conceit, it has presumed to call Progress.

QUIDA